

## 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians for 2020 announced

Darwin-based Barrister Lyma Nguyen has been named as the overall winner of the 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australian Awards for 2020, a list that includes LPGA golfer Minjee Lee, lawyer Tessa Sullivan and disability advocate Danny Hui.

Lyma's award recognises her ongoing contribution as an International Civil Party Counsel at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in Cambodia and human rights champion. She has provided over ten years of *pro bono* legal services to hundreds of victims of the Khmer Rouge regime, including foreign nationals, members of the Cambodian diaspora and ethnic Vietnamese civilians who were the subject of genocide atrocities.

"Lyma Nguyen is an inspiration for Australia and a true leader in our region," said Jason Johnson, Managing Partner of executive search firm Johnson Partners, and one of 11 judges of the award, which also included New South Wales Public Service Commissioner Kathrina Lo, chef Adam Liaw, and Westpac's Rachna Ghandi.

"This 40 Under 40 list is a remarkable group of Australian leaders across a diversity of sectors," said Jason Johnson. "Now more than ever we need to recognise their powerful contribution to this country."

The 40 Under 40 list was announced on the final day of the [Asian-Australian Leadership Summit](#), which attracted more than 1500 online participants across the country following the groundbreaking [inaugural Summit and Awards in 2019](#).

"The Covid pandemic has further intensified the discrimination that Asian-Australians regularly confront in the workplace, and across Australian communities," said Jieh-Yung Lo, Director of the Australian National University's Centre for Asian-Australian Leadership.

Asian-Australians account for about 13 percent of our population, but hold under four percent of senior leadership positions.

"I am honoured to be named among this very exciting group, said Lyma Nguyen." "Australia's Asian heritage is an enormous asset to this nation - and cultural diversity in leadership needs to be a high priority to ensure multidimensional perspectives come through."

There are remarkable stories of impact: Minjee Lee is the first woman to win the Greg Norman Medal for best Australian professional golfer on the world stage, Tessa Sullivan is the only Thai-Chinese National to have been elected to public office, and Usman Iftikhar's Catalysr has supported 345 migrant and refugee entrepreneurs from over 40 countries to launch their own businesses.

### Top Awardees:

**Overall Winner:** Lyma Nguyen, Barrister

**Arts & Culture:** Pearl Tan, Australian Film Television and Radio School

**Community & Advocacy / Not for Profit:** Danny Hui, Founder & CEO, sameview

**Corporate:** Shelli Trung, Managing Partner, REACH Australia, Second Century Ventures

**Education:** Wesa Chau, CEO, Cultural Intelligence

**Entrepreneurship:** Usman Iftikhar, CEO, Catalysr

**Professions & Legal:** Lyma Nguyen, Barrister

**Public Sector / Government:** Tessa Sullivan, Lawyer and Officer of the Supreme Court of Victoria

**Science & Medicine:** Madhu Bhaskaran, Professor, RMIT University

**Sport:** Minjee Lee, LPGA Professional

Penny Burt, Group Chief Executive Officer of Asialink at the University of Melbourne, said: "Asian-Australians can play a critical role in our economy's recovery from the pandemic. "We need a better awareness of the obstacles facing Asian-Australians and practical steps towards greater representation in leadership positions."

**All category winners are available for interviews upon request. For media enquiries please contact Will McCallum - [will@twogongs.com](mailto:will@twogongs.com) or +61 420 763 047.**

*The full 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians list for 2020 is attached.*

The [Asian-Australian Leadership Summit](#) is an initiative of Asialink, PwC and Australian National University. The Summit will be held in Melbourne on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th September and aims to confront the under-representation of Asian-Australians in senior leadership positions.

The 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australian awards winners were selected with the help of leading executive search firm, Johnson Partners, and a panel of judges that includes the firm's Managing Partner **Jason Johnson**, Senior Lecturer at Deakin University, **Muneera Bano**, Managing Director at Link Group, **Vivek Bhatia**, Group Chief Executive Officer, Asialink at the University of Melbourne, **Penny Burt**, General Manager of Group Operations, Westpac, **Rachna Ghandi**, writer and television presenter, **Adam Liaw**, New South Wales Public Service Commissioner, **Kathrina Lo**, Director of the ANU Centre for Asian-Australian Leadership, **Jieh-Yung Lo**, Artistic Director – OzAsia Festival, **Annette Shun Wah**, ABC Journalist, Broadcaster and Presenter, **Kumi Taguchi**, Chief Executive Officer, CHAMP Ventures, **Su Ming Wong**, Partner, PwC, **Ken Woo**. Applicants need to identify as Asian-Australian and be under the age of 40 to be considered for the awards.

For more details see: <https://www.asianaustrianleadership.com.au/>

<b>Category Winner</b> <b>Overall Winner</b>			
Category	Name	Title	Organisation
Arts & Culture	<b>Pearl Tan</b>	<b>Senior Lecturer in Directing</b>	<b>Australian Film Television and Radio School</b>
	Corrie Chen	Director / Screenwriter	N/A
	Bhakthi Puvanenthiran	Editor, ABC Life	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
	Dr Mikala Tai	Director	4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
	Geraldine Viswanathan	Actor/Writer/Producer	Self-Employed
Community & Advocacy / Not for Profit	<b>Danny Hui</b>	<b>Founder and CEO</b>	<b>sameview</b>
	Tarang Chawla	Ambassador	Our Watch
	Sally Hetherington	CEO	Human and Hope Association Inc.
	Mariam Mohammed	Speaker, Facilitator, Co-founder	MoneyGirl
	Tim Lo Surdo	Founder, National Director	Democracy in Colour
Corporate	<b>Shelli Trung</b>	<b>Managing Partner</b>	<b>REACH Australia, Second Century Ventures</b>
	Christopher Kong	Director, Data & Digital Transformation	Danone China
	Dr Kaushik Sridhar	Group Manager, Social Responsibility and ESG Reporting	Evolution Mining
	Shamane Tan	Author, Founder of Cyber Risk Meetup   Chief Growth Officer	Privasec
Education	<b>Wesa Chau</b>	<b>CEO</b>	<b>Cultural Intelligence</b>
	Ayesha Ahmed	Technologist, Student	The University of Melbourne

	<b>Elena Collinson</b>	Senior Researcher	Australia-China Relations Institute, University of Technology Sydney
	<b>Aayushi Khillan</b>	Board Member	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
	<b>Lisa Qin</b>	Director of Odyssey Learning and Education Consultant	Odyssey Early Learning
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>Usman Iftikhar</b>	<b>CEO</b>	<b>Catalysr</b>
	<b>Anson Hongwei Zhang</b>	Chief Executive Officer	One Stop Warehouse Pty Ltd / Discover Energy Pty Ltd
	<b>William On</b>	Co-Founder & Director	Shippit
	<b>Julia Suh</b>	Founder & CEO	Paper Plain
	<b>Linh Podetti</b>	Founder & CEO	Outsourcing Angel
<b>Professions and Legal</b>	<b>Lyma Nguyen</b>	<b>Barrister</b>	<b>Independent</b>
	<b>Harry Hoang</b>	Chief Executive Officer	Tailored Accounts
	<b>Tuanh Nguyen</b>	Director - Legal	PwC
	<b>Melissa Ran</b>	Head of Community	AirTree Ventures
	<b>Christine Yeung</b>	CEO and Principal Psychologist	Beyond Story, AAOP
<b>Public Sector/Government</b>	<b>Tessa Sullivan</b>	<b>Lawyer and Officer of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Mediator and Arbitrator, Scientist</b>	<b>University of New England and Sullivan Property Pty Ltd</b>
	<b>Helen Oh</b>	Senior Associate, NSW Trade & Investment	NSW Treasury
	<b>Jonathan Saw</b>	Global Engagement Manager	Australian Trade and Investment Commission
	<b>Helen Zhang</b>	Harvard Kennedy School Researcher and Legal Officer at Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Harvard Kennedy School and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>Science &amp; Medicine</b>	<b>Madhu Bhaskaran</b>	<b>Professor and Co-Leader, Functional Materials and Microsystems Research Group</b>	<b>RMIT University</b>
	<b>Dr Vini Gautam</b>	Lecturer	University of Melbourne
	<b>Barry Nguyen</b>	Co-Founder & CEO	HealthAide
	<b>Dr Jacqueline Romero</b>	Senior Lecturer and Westpac Bicentennial Foundation Research Fellow	The University of Queensland
	<b>Dr Zachary Tan</b>	Chief Strategy Officer at CancerAid, and Research Fellow, Centre for Eye	CancerAid & Centre for Eye Research Australia

		Research Australia	
Sport	<b>Minjee Lee</b>	<b>Australia Professional Golfer</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	<b>Kashif Bouns</b>	General Manager	Western Bulldogs Community Foundation

**OVERALL WINNER AND PROFESSIONS SECTOR WINNER: Lyma Nguyen, Darwin**

Lyma has provided over ten years of pro bono legal services to hundreds of victims of the Khmer Rouge regime including foreign nationals and members of the Cambodian diaspora plus ethnic Vietnamese civilians who were the subject of genocide atrocities. Dealing with contemporary human rights and statelessness concerns, Lyma is deemed an international expert in nationality laws. Also practicing at the bar, her work predominantly focuses on criminal cases, but also includes youth justice, mental health, human rights, administrative law, disciplinary committees and tribunal matters.

**COMMUNITY & ADVOCACY / NOT FOR PROFIT SECTOR: Danny Hui, Sydney**

Having achieved success as an executive in the utilities industry specialising in disaster management, critical infrastructure operations plus work health and safety, it was Danni's son's diagnosis of a rare disease that propelled him to found Sameview, an innovative online platform that connects families with the right team of caregivers to support children with disabilities. It advocates more effective health care delivery through improved collaboration networks that currently support over 1,000 people across Australia and New Zealand.

**CORPORATE SECTOR: Shelli Trung, Melbourne**

Shelli has led investment decision making for two venture firms in the last five years including REACH Australia and Second Century Ventures, the second largest global proptech fund with a portfolio of 100+ investments – a remarkable achievement given that only 13% of women world-wide are involved in venture investment decision making (as quoted at the RAISE 2020 global summit). She has also actively championed state grant funding for Queensland start-ups and enabled over \$3m in funding to start-ups for the QUT CEA Creative Tech Fund.

**EDUCATION SECTOR: Wesa Chau, Melbourne**

Wesa is the CEO of Cultural Intelligence, a specialist consultancy firm helping organisations understand the power of cultural diversity. As an advocate for social change, she is a commentator on diversity issues on Australian mainstream media including The Age, The Guardian, ABC, SBS, plus Channels 7, 9 and 10.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Usman Iftikhar, Sydney**

Usman is a systems entrepreneur who passionately utilises the power of entrepreneurship to collectively solve the global climate emergency and global refugee crisis. He is the co-founder and CEO of Catalysr, a start-up pre-accelerator in Australia which empowers migrant and refugee entrepreneurs to launch their own business start-ups. Catalysr has supported 345 migrant and refugee entrepreneurs from 40+ countries and champions the contribution of migrant and refugee business owners to Australia.

**PUBLIC / GOVERNMENT SECTOR: Tessa Sullivan, Melbourne**

As a lawyer and officer of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Tessa has worked in the areas of immigration, human rights plus family and criminal law, and is the first Thai-Chinese National to be elected into Government. Her advocacy in the #MeToo era and campaigns against violence against women has made her the 'face' of the movement in Australia (she single-handedly changed the legislation in local government to acknowledge and prevent such offences).

**ARTS & CULTURE SECTOR: Pearl Tan, Sydney**

Pearl is a screen content maker and educator and founding director of Pearly Productions, a filmmaking boutique that focuses on conversations amongst people with diverse backgrounds. She balances this pursuit with her role as Senior Lecturer in Directing at the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) where she is instrumental in influencing and guiding the next generation of storytellers and shapes the school's policies regarding diversity and inclusion.

**SCIENCE & MEDICINE SECTOR: Madhu Bhaskaran, Melbourne**

Madhu is a professor who co-leads the Functional Materials and Microsystems Research Group at RMIT University. Her work seeks to transform conventional hard electronics into soft and unbreakable products, thin enough to create electronic skin. She co-founded the Women Researchers' network at RMIT University in 2013 which significantly shaped the university's Gender Equality Action Plan and currently sits on the National Board of Directors for Women in STEM Australia, connecting women across all sectors and career stages to each other.

**SPORT SECTOR: Minjee Lee, Perth**

Minjee is an Australian professional golfer from Perth. She became the number one ranked amateur golfer in February 2014 after winning the Oates Victorian Open, remaining number one until turning professional that September. She ended 2018 ranked second on the money list with \$1,551,032 in earnings. In 2019, Minjee won the Hugel-Air Premia LA Open, her fifth LPGA Tour victory. By late the following month, she had risen to number two in the Women's World Golf Rankings.